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JEPHSON

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TO THE  
CIVIL SERVICE LITERARY SOCIETY  
(DUBLIN)



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# AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

## CIVIL SERVICE LITERARY SOCIETY

(DUBLIN),

AT THE

OPENING MEETING OF THE SECOND SESSION,

IN THE

MOLESWORTH HALL, MOLESWORTH-STREET,

ON TUESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 29TH, 1867.

BY THE AUDITOR,

HENRY L. JEPHSON,

OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE.

DUBLIN: :

PRINTED BY ALEXANDER THOM, 87 & 88, ABBEY-STREET.

1867.



TO THE MOST NOBLE  
THE MARQUIS OF ABERCORN, K.G.,  
LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND;

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE  
THE EARL OF MAYO, M.P.,  
CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND;

AND TO THE VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE  
CIVIL SERVICE LITERARY SOCIETY,

*This Address*

IS, BY KIND PERMISSION,

MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

*5-13-42. Hanray - Fletcher -*

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# Civil Service Literary Society.

**FOUNDED 1867.**

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- 
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 Barney, Richard, Poor Law Commission.  
 Beveridge, John F., General Register Office.  
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 Mooney, Thomas A., Poor Law Commission.  
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 Penny, John W., Secretary's Department, Board of Public Works.  
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 Scales, Robert, Secretary's Department, Board of Public Works.  
 Smith, Jephson H., Accountant's Department, General Post Office.  
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 Tuohy, Patrick J., Secretary's Department, Board of Public Works.  
 White, John C., Surveyor's Department, General Post Office.  
 Young, William T., Royal Hibernian Military School.

## HONORARY MEMBERS.

Kingsbury, James C., General Register Office.  
 Lamb, William, A.B., Government Prisons Office.  
 Sproule, George, Government Prisons Office.  
 Winter, Richard, A.B., General Register Office.

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 PRIZES AWARDED AT THE CONCLUSION OF  
 THE SESSION, 1867.

For the best Essay, . . .	Mr. W. T. Young.
For the second best Essay, . . .	„ J. H. Smith.
To the best Speaker, . . .	„ W. F. Madden.
To the second best Speaker, . . .	„ J. R. O'Flanagan.

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 EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES.

THE Opening Meeting of the Second Session, 1867-68, was held on Tuesday Evening, October 29, 1867, in the Molesworth Hall, Molesworth-street.

Among those who attended were :—

Sir William Wilde; W. H. Newell, LL.D., Secretary, Board of National Education; E. Le Clerc, M.D., Surgeon, Royal Irish Constabulary; J. F. Waller, LL.D.; J. H. Owen, M.A., Architect, Board of Public Works; P. J. Murray, Director of Convict Prisons; W. Gernon, M.A., Secretary to the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests; Rev. David Stuart, Chaplain, Mountjoy Government Prison; J. F. Browning, Chief Clerk, Royal Irish Constabulary Office; Rev. W. Neville, Chaplain, Royal Hibernian Military School; The Auditor, Law Students' Debating Society; Digby P. Starkey, LL.D., Accountant-General; P. J. Keenan, Chief of Inspection, Board of National Education; Robert M'Donnell, M.D.; T. H. Taylor, Chief Secretary's Office; Charles Granby Burke, Master, Court

of Common Pleas; Dr. W. M. Burke, Physician to His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant; The Secretary, College Philosophical Society; Robert O'Hara, Esq., Barrister-at-Law; James Duncan, Esq.; &c., &c., &c.

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On the motion of the Secretary, seconded by Mr. J. G. ALCORN, the chair was taken at 8 o'clock by

SIR WILLIAM WILDE.

The minutes of the last meeting having been read by the Secretary, and confirmed, the Auditor, Mr. HENRY L. JEPHSON, delivered the Inaugural Address.

Dr. WALLER, v.p., moved "That the marked thanks of the meeting be given to the Auditor for his Address, and that it be printed and circulated at the expense of the Society."

Mr. P. J. KEENAN, v.p., seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. W. GERON, M.A., v.p., moved "That the Civil Service Literary Society is entitled to the support of the gentlemen of the Civil Service in Ireland, both as a bond of union and an intellectual resource."

Mr. J. H. OWEN, M.A., v.p., seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Master BURKE having been called to the second chair, Mr. J. R. O'FLANAGAN moved, and Mr. C. H. BRIEN seconded a vote of thanks to Sir WILLIAM WILDE for his kindness in presiding.

Sir WILLIAM WILDE having replied, the meeting adjourned.

# ADDRESS.



MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN,

Deeply impressed with the honour conferred upon me by my fellow members of the Civil Service Literary Society, and grateful for the confidence they have reposed in me in electing me as Auditor, I rise this evening to deliver the opening address of the present session, and I feel the honour to be the greater since such an election entails upon me the delivery of an address inaugural, not only of the session but of the Society.

The project of such a society originated with a few enterprising members of the Service, and was carried on despite gloomy prophecies as to success, despite the *cui bono?* taunt of men who see no good in anything intellectual, nor in anything tending to mental improvement, until we at length succeeded in bringing together a sufficient number of members to give us some standing, and were so fortunate as to obtain the patronage (most kindly given) of several gentlemen in the highest branches of the Service, who have already earned for themselves names in the literary world, and who were willing to assist

others to follow in their steps. In the early part of the present year success had so far crowned our efforts that we were able to hold weekly meetings for the discussion of various subjects, and when at the end of June we separated for the summer it was determined that, having progressed so favourably, we should venture to give a firmer and a higher status to our Society by the delivery of an address at the commencement of the next session. The heavy but pleasing burden was placed on my shoulders. It would have been easy to find a person better qualified than myself for this purpose, but the very fact of my having been chosen is so flattering to my feelings that, however conscious I may be of my own unworthiness, I will not trouble you with the apologies generally made under such circumstances.

That great and accomplished orator, Lord Plunket, while he was studying in Trinity College thus addresses the Historical Society, to the chair of which he had been elected in 1783 :—

“’Tis customary for your chairman at the opening of the session to expatiate on the excellence of this institution. The subject is a rich one, but not inexhaustible, and I confess a strong reluctance to enter on a path where so many with firmer tread have gone before me, from which every flower has been already culled, and where not a beauty remains to be brought to view.”

More than eighty years have passed since Lord Plunket used these words, and that same path has been since then often retrodden, yet, as I must look upon our Society as but a new-born babe requiring fostering care to bring it to maturity, I feel it my duty to give my reasons for recommending it to your favour and support. Looking back over the pages of history we find that many of our most celebrated orators have made their first essays in literary and debating societies. Burke, Bushe, and Plunket, first tried their wings in the College Historical Society, till having strengthened them by constant use, they soared into the highest and noblest flights of eloquence. And when we see that such societies sometimes become a school for orators, we may, perhaps, without presumption, hope, that in a Service which numbers several hundred members, containing men of the best education and learning, and men of high talent, we shall, by encouraging a desire for speaking in public, and affording an opportunity for practice, perchance, at some future time, send forth from our ranks at least some few who shall earn names for themselves, names that will live in the history of their country. And again, when we consider that the majority of the members of the Civil Service in this country are Irish, and that eloquence is usually regarded as an Irish attribute, we have reasons to hope that our Society may develop and guide whatever of the national talent is to be found among us.



No country since the commencement of the Christian era has handed down to posterity the names of so many celebrated orators as Ireland. Who amongst modern orators has equalled the immortal genius of Burke? who ever rivalled the brilliancy and wit of Sheridan? and what assembly ever displayed such a splendour of eloquence as the Irish Parliament when it was drawing near the close of its existence?

And should anyone seek to know what advantage the power of oratory confers on a man, or why any trouble should be taken to acquire it, he will find his answer in the lives of men who have by its means risen from the lowest ranks to the greatest eminence, of men who have earned imperishable names in the annals of the civilized world. Nor is it alone by immortalizing his name that the orator gains the reward of his toil and of his talents. Raised sometimes to the highest position to which a statesman can attain, or standing at the head of a people contesting their rights, he becomes not only the object of love and homage, but enjoys within himself the happy consciousness that he is rendering his life of service to his countrymen and to his fellow-creatures.

Such great results as these, however, are not achieved without great labour. The block of marble may contain streaks and shades of varied beauty, but it is the labour and skill of the polisher

which brings them to light. He cannot make or add to, these natural colours, but he can develop what might otherwise have remained unknown for ever. Did not polishing make an orator of Curran? Hardly could it have been expected that he who was nicknamed "Stuttering Jack," or "Orator mum," would ever have *his* name handed down to posterity as a great speaker! Yet the continual practice smoothed down the roughnesses of voice and speech, and gave him the facility of expressing his noble thoughts in noble language.

It has been generally considered that eloquence is a divine gift, but it is conformable to the analogy of nature that her richest treasures should be concealed from man, until brought forth by his labour and perseverance. I would, therefore, seek to prevail on some of you to try whether you possess this hidden gift. The subject on which you are to speak must be studied, the facts must be collected, you must as it were lay the wood in order, and not until then, have you a right to expect that fire from heaven will kindle it into a blaze which will illumine the world. Sir Joshua Reynolds, in one of his discourses, says—

"It is indisputably evident that a great part of every man's life must be employed in collecting materials for the exercise of genius. Invention, strictly speaking, is little more than a new combination of those images which have been previously gathered and stored in the memory. Nothing can

come of nothing. He who has laid up no materials can produce no combinations."

The faculty often lies dormant in men's minds, but they grudge the labour of awakening it. It may be bestowed on many of you. You may carry the latent flame, and yet not feel it burning in your breast. Men frequently spend the best part of their lives in rendering themselves master of some one particular science; why then should it be supposed that less exertion is required to attain the object of an orator, which Cicero defines to be the giving to speech the greatest power of which it is susceptible. The man who is content, that he is able to converse with his friends in every-day language—content, that he can earn his daily bread—strives but little further, and is like to a spring choked up with rubbish, whence slowly trickles the water, which, were the impediments removed, would rush forth in a pure and sparkling stream. It was by diligence that our Irish orators rose to the eminent positions they held. Perpetual study, constant practice in writing and speaking, and persevering toil gave them much of that fluency of speech, that copiousness of matter, for which they are so remarkable. Nor should we be discouraged if, in trying to follow as far as we can in their steps, we do not all at once succeed; but remember that by steady progress we shall, as they did, reach the goal at last. And is not the prize worth striving for?

What, indeed, can be so gratifying to man as the conscious power of being able to move the minds of other men, to make them feel as you do, and bend them to your will! What honest pride must have swelled the bosom of Wilberforce when he found that his eloquence had stirred up in the heart of England an inextinguishable hatred to the slave trade and slavery, when after passing the Abolition Bill, the whole House of Commons burst forth into acclamations of applause, and greeted him as the author of that great work! How must O'Connell have felt, when, after twenty years of labour in endeavouring, as he says himself, "to rouse the torpid, to animate the lukewarm, and control the violent," he at length succeeded in obtaining the Roman Catholic Emancipation Bill, amidst the acclamations of his grateful fellow-countrymen! How must Cobden have felt when the repeal of the Corn Laws, to which he had devoted all the powers of his eloquence, was passed, and he was declared the friend of the poor! How noble an ambition to be the means of passing some great law by which your name may be enrolled among the benefactors of mankind! Is not this a sufficient reward for any labour that can be bestowed? Do not such glorious results encourage you to follow in the same course?

In spite of all these advantages, however, oratory has had its vilifiers. People usually consider that

“talk,” as it is called, is opposed to action, and that (to use a well known phrase) “great talkers are little doers.” It is as if the steam escaping in words left not enough force for action, and in a measure I think this is true. Great doers are not always great talkers, nor great orators always great statesmen.

This, however, is but an instance of that infinite diversity of powers which we observe to be a law prevailing in nature, and which has to some extent been imitated by man in the artificial division of labour which has produced such great results. Thus, one man makes the instruments which another uses. One man composes a strain which might lie dead and unknown for ever, but that another’s voice gives it vitality—almost immortality. The mighty Shakespeare, himself unable to act out his own great conceptions, is not known to have performed any part except that of the *Ghost* in “Hamlet,” while to Garrick, Macklin, and Kemble, was given the honour of interpreting him to the world. But let us not for this reason undervalue the power of oratory. Noble thoughts expressed in noble language *are* often the motive-power to noble actions, and so form part of them. As well might we despise the wind which swells the ship’s expanded sails, and makes her

“Walk the waters like a thing of life ;”—

as well might we deny the power of the blast which heats the furnace, and makes the sternest metals soft

and ductile,—for so can noble words fan the spark of patriotism and benevolence existing in almost every heart, till it bursts into a generous flame which warms and enlightens every object within its reach.

I shall proceed now to draw a few illustrations of these principles as exemplified by our Irish orators, foremost amongst whom stands Edmund Burke. We are proud of his name, and glory in him the more because his powers were devoted not only to the cause of the country that had given him birth, but to the cause of truth and justice all over the world. And never was there a period in which such talents were more wanted than that in which he flourished. It was the commencement of a new period in the history of Europe—the commencement of a great transition when the pent-up passions of years were to burst forth. The feelings of the people were convulsed. Revolution, anarchy, and infidelity reigned supreme in men's minds, and France exhibited their fearful consequences. The mighty eloquence of Burke stemmed the tide that set in towards England; the pen and tongue were here of more avail than the sword, and when such weapons were wielded by *him*, their force was irresistible. And how had *he* who thus stood at the head of England, bearing the brunt of the storm, spent his early years? While yet very young he entered college, and soon became engrossed in study. And as year after year passed by, that study never relaxed. Notwithstanding the duties of business, he found

time to add daily to his store of knowledge ; not content with the outlines, but seeking to master the details. This diligence it was that made him so thoroughly master of the subjects on which he spoke, that gave him such copiousness of language, that strengthened the powers of his mind, and supplied him with the matter of those speeches upon which his fame as an orator rests. And though he never rose to eminence as a statesman, yet for his oratory shall his name outlive the names of the ministers under whom he served. He rose to his high position without parliamentary influence, without high or weighty connexions ; but commencing at the very foot of the ladder, by his own exertion, and by great labour, he reached the topmost rung. As a specimen of his style, allow me to make a quotation from his celebrated “ Letter to a French nobleman,” in which, alluding to the *émigrés* leaving France, he says—

“Mankind has no title to demand that we should be slaves to their guilt and insolence, or that we should serve them in spite of themselves. Minds sore with the poignant sense of insulted virtue, filled with high disdain against the pride of triumphant baseness, often have it not in their choice to stand their ground. Their complexion (which might defy the rack), cannot go through such a trial. Something very high must fortify men to that proof. But when I am driven to comparison, surely I cannot hesitate for a moment to prefer to such men as are common,

those heroes, who, in the midst of despair, perform all the tasks of hope ; who subdue their feelings to their duties ; who, in the cause of humanity, liberty, and honour, abandon all the satisfactions of life, and every day incur a fresh risk of life itself. Do me the justice to believe that I never can prefer any fastidious virtue (virtue still), to the unconquered perseverance, to the affectionate patience of those who watch day and night by the bedside of their delirious country ; who for the love of that dear and venerable name, bear all the disgusts and all the buffets they receive from their frantic mother. Sir, I do look on you as true martyrs ; I regard you as soldiers who act far more in the spirit of our Commander-in-Chief and the Captain of our salvation, than those who have left you .(though I must first bolt myself very thoroughly, and know that I can do better before I can censure them). I assure you that when I consider your unconquerable fidelity to your sovereign and to your country, the courage, fortitude, magnanimity, and long-suffering of yourself and of the Abbé Maury, and of Mons. Cazales, and of many worthy persons of all orders in your Assembly. I forget in the lustre of these great qualities, that on your side has been displayed an eloquence so rational, manly, and convincing, that no time or country, perhaps, has ever excelled. But your talents disappear in my admiration of your virtues.”

It was while Burke was in the maturity of his



fame that another celebrated Irish orator, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, stepped out upon the stage to shed additional lustre on the country of his birth. He was from the beginning conscious of his great powers, although they had not yet developed themselves; as witness the anecdote of his asking his friend Woodfall what he thought of his first speech; and on receiving a discouraging reply he vehemently exclaimed, "It is in me, however, and by God it shall come out;" and impressed with this conviction, he laboured hard until his assertion was verified. His papers showed that his speeches were so elaborately prepared that there were marks to places where (to give his eloquence greater effect) he intended to introduce exclamations of horror or contempt. It has even been said that the pains he bestowed on his speeches showed that he was not a man of genius. But as a great painter justly remarks, "Genius is the ability to take pains. I know nothing of genius—I know of great powers of application."

In the same manner Newton, that greatest of natural philosophers, looked upon himself and his labours in a very different light from the rest of mankind, and ascribed all that he had accomplished not to any peculiar genius with which nature had endowed him, but to what he termed a certain "patience of thought," as the only instrument with which his wondrous intellectual conquests had been effected. Great as Sheridan was (and he was one of those giants whom nature had endowed with extraordinary

powers to grapple with the difficulties of the times), he laboured constantly to improve his speaking. His delivery was sometimes thick and indistinct, he corrected it; his style too florid, he remedied it; his wit was not condensed enough, he condensed it; and polishing it to the highest degree, he flashed it forth at the exact moment its brilliancy would be most effective. Entering on his career, we are told he gave little promise of becoming an orator. It was only by labour equal to that of Demosthenes, that he attained such a perfection that he was listened to as a "being that belonged to another sphere." Never perhaps was the power of oratory for its own sake, and irrespective of the subject under debate, so strikingly recognized as on the occasion of his celebrated speech relative to the Begum princesses of Oude. This speech was a collection of the brightest ideas that had passed through his mind for many years. On it he lavished every talent. In it he brought to light every glittering gem of thought, and exhausted every treasure of his mind. Nor was this labour bestowed in vain. The House of Commons was electrified. Political rivalry, the envious spirit of detraction, which so often warps and poisons the judgment when party feeling is evoked, disappeared for a moment amidst the blaze of admiration which saluted this magnificent oration.

Seldom indeed has it fallen to the lot of a public speaker to be greeted with an eulogium in which kindred spirits of the highest order seemed to lay

aside every other difference, and only vied with each other in choosing adequate terms of praise for what was no longer for them the success of a political friend or antagonist in debate, but one of the most splendid triumphs ever achieved in the great art which they admired, and of which they themselves were no mean masters.

What shall we think of a speech which Mr. Burke declared to be "the most astonishing effort of eloquence, argument, and wit united, of which there was any record or tradition;" of which Mr. Fox said "all that he had ever heard, all that he had ever read, when compared with it, dwindled into nothing and vanished like vapour before the sun;" while Mr. Pitt acknowledged that "it surpassed all the eloquence of ancient and modern times, and possessed everything that genius or art could furnish to agitate and control the mind of man. It was on the conclusion of this speech that the House of Commons adjourned to give the members time to recover from the excitement which it had caused.

And who was he who reaped this glorious harvest, the produce of genius cultivated by unwearying labour? *An Irishman*—born to no exalted position, and to whose rise no extraneous circumstances of fortune contributed. Let us acknowledge him then with pride, and let us imitate him in the efforts by which he attained such eminence in the practice of that art for the encouragement of which we are here assembled.

Sheridan was right when he said that the power of oratory was in him; but it was by diligence and application alone that what was indeed in him was brought out.

While he, an Irishman, was thus swaying the minds of the English Parliament, another Irish orator was also devoting his transcendent talents to the cause of Ireland, and endearing himself to her people. The star of Grattan was in the ascendant. At the Temple in London he commenced the study of law; but the galleries of the Houses of Parliament possessed attractions more congenial to his tastes, and listening there to the grandest eloquence that England could produce, to the magnificent orations of Burke and the fiery eloquence of Chatham, he saw how glorious was the position of a great orator, and his soul was stirred within him to a noble emulation, and to a self-consciousness of his own powers. The Italian painter Correggio, on seeing a masterpiece of Raffael, is said to have exclaimed, "*Son pittore anch' io;*" and well in his afterlife did he realize this boast. Some feeling of the same nature seems to have passed through the soul of Grattan while he listened to these great prototypes of his eloquence; for so great was the impression made on his mind that, following the promptings of his genius, he threw himself into the pursuit of oratory with all the energy of his nature. And when he entered on the career for which he had so long prepared himself, the powers he had cultivated seemed to

burst forth at once upon the world in the full strength of maturity. His eloquence, like the wand of an enchanter, caused the fetters to fall from the limbs they had so long galled. First were relaxed the restrictions imposed upon the commerce of Ireland ; then disappeared the supremacy of the English over the Irish Parliament ; and all this without violence. No blood stained the weapons by which these triumphs were achieved. We may well look on and wonder at the power of eloquence. The achievements were not those of a statesman, not those of a legislator ; but of an orator and a patriot. Who now will say that great talkers are but little doers ? Great in intellect as in oratory, his soul was absorbed in the cause of his country alone. He did not as other Irish orators had done, seek the larger field of English politics. And when we compare him with Burke, his predecessor and prototype, we see in Burke the lighthouse whose *revolving* flame illumined *every* side around ; in Grattan the *fixed* light, shining alone on Irish waters, illumining that sea of troubles so long shrouded in impenetrable darkness, showing where the dangers lay ; and undimmed, unshaken in the midst of the warfare of the elements, inspiring with courage, hope, and confidence the heart of the tempest-tossed sailor. When *his* light was quenched, dawn was already breaking in the eastern sky, and there was promise of a bright and peaceful day.

But before that time, and while Grattan was yet pleading the cause of Ireland, an orator of a different

stamp stood by his side—Curran, whose eloquence, though, perhaps, losing a little of its splendour from so close a proximity to so bright a luminary as Grattan, has left its mark in the history of the past. His fame as an orator rests more on speeches at the Bar than in Parliament; and these speeches, producing as they did such striking effect, were all the result of labour. Carefully prepared beforehand, not written down and committed to memory, but thought out, borne in mind, and when the occasion came for their production, delivered in words which the excitement of the moment made more fervid, more effectual. There are few orators who studied so much. From his youth he sought to acquire the power of speaking, his genius pressing him on to persevere in strengthening his powers. By the study of poets and political writers, by the daily habit of reading and declaiming in the solitude of his chamber, by constantly watching and correcting his faults, he overcame most of the natural defects of his voice and manner, and gained that absolute control over language for which he was so remarkable. And let us recollect that he whose name is thus enrolled among Ireland's orators, has recommended to posterity the habit of attending debating societies; an exercise to which he attributed much of his own skill and facility in extemporary debate. Sanctioned by such authority, surely we may press forward with the work we have in hand, and stimulate each other in furthering it.

There are many other great names in the history

of Irish eloquence. Bushe, with his classical taste and refined wit; Plunket, with his close reasoning and vigorous grasp of intellect; Sheil, whose poetic mind and impetuous delivery enchanted his hearers; and O'Connell, who seemed born to sway the passions of a people, whose words moved their hearts as the trees of the forest are moved by the wind. But I should weary your patience by dwelling longer on the lives of these great men, or by enlarging on the advantages reaped by those who have possessed the power of oratory. There are two more points to which however before concluding I would for a moment turn your attention.

The times in which our Irish orators lived, furnished them with mighty themes which doubtless contributed much to their fame. The great wave of the French Revolution, which then threatened to engulf the civilization of the world—the desperate conflict in which England struggled for supremacy, even for her existence—these were subjects well fitted for the stupendous powers of a Burke and a Sheridan. The independence of Ireland—the galling fetters of penal laws under which the majority of their countrymen were suffering, fired the eloquence of a Grattan and of an O'Connell.

We need not, however, fear that no great theme is left for an orator in the present day. Are there not still topics of sufficient importance to need a clear and eloquent exponent? Will there not ever be left to the orator room to employ his

mighty talents upon the improvement of his fellow-creatures? As I have said before, I know no nobler ambition, I can conceive no higher earthly aim, than to be able by eloquence to sway men's passion, to restrain men from evil, to impel them to good, rouse them from infatuation, stir them to virtuous and benevolent deeds, and guide their actions to the welfare of the state, to the welfare of mankind.

And if we are in earnest we shall prosper. The earnestness of our Irish orators was one of the causes of the wonderful effects wrought by their eloquence. They were no hired advocates, no special pleaders in a cause they but half believed; but heart and soul, mind and body, were devoted to the service of a country that needed their talents. What love to his country must he have borne, who declared that his spirit went down into the grave with the Parliament of Ireland! What love was his who when Ireland and Irish politics were mentioned, burst into tears! It was in the intense fervour, in the impassioned feeling of each phrase, in the genuine outpourings of a full heart, that much of the beauty of their eloquence lay.

In the remarks which I have had the honour of offering to you on this evening, I have attempted, by drawing your attention to some of the great uses, political, social, or scientific, to which oratory may be applied, to encourage you to a diligent pursuit of those studies which are required for its acquisition,



and to gain your support to an association intended for its promotion. I am but too conscious that I have very imperfectly executed this task; for great indeed would be his powers who could exhaust a subject so extensive and so varied, even if it were possible to do so within the compass of an address like the present. I cannot, however, quit the subject without dwelling on it for a moment under another point of view—I mean that in which it may be regarded, independent of its utility, as a source of the highest intellectual enjoyment. The study of the great models of eloquence, whether ancient or modern, whether of the Pulpit, the Senate, or the Bar, will not conduct you to desert places or through thorny paths. All that is noble in sentiment, all that is profound in reason, all that is sparkling in wit, or brilliant in imagination, will be unrolled before the student of oratory in the course of his researches, and thoroughly attached to a pursuit in itself so delightful he will feel the full force of the beautiful expression used by Cicero, when in expatiating on this his favourite pursuit, he says—

“*Haec studia delectant domi; non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, perigrinantur, rustificantur.*”

DEBATES AND ESSAYS FOR THE SESSION 1867.

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*Tuesday, 19th March, 1867.*

WILLIAM GERON, ESQ., M.A., Secretary, Board of Charities,  
in the Chair.

*Essay.*—"The range and influence of Literature,"  
by Mr. Thomas Nicolls.

SPEAKERS:

Mr. C. H. BRIEN,  
„ J. H. SMITH, *Auditor*;

Mr. R. H. ELMES,  
„ J. DE GLANVILLE.

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*Monday, 25th March, 1867.*

JAMES H. OWEN, ESQ., M.A., Architect, Board of Works,  
in the Chair.

*Debate.*—"That the Career of Napoleon I. deserves our admiration."

SPEAKERS:

*Affirmative.*

Mr. W. J. GERON, *Secretary*;  
„ T. NICOLLS,  
„ J. LOWNDES,

*Negative.*

Mr. J. H. SMITH, *Auditor*;  
„ R. H. ELMES,

The votes were equal, and the Chairman declined to give a casting vote.

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*Monday, 1st April, 1867.*

HENRY H. STEWART, ESQ., M.D., Lucan Lunatic Asylum,  
in the Chair.

*Essay.*—"Mental Dissipation," by Mr. J. Lowndes.

SPEAKERS:

Mr. J. G. ALCORN, *Treasurer*; Mr. R. H. Elmes, Mr. W. J. GERON, *Secretary*.

*Monday, 8th April, 1867.*

JEPHSON HUBAND SMITH, Esq., *Auditor*, in the Chair.

*Debate.*—"Do Magazines and such periodic publications exert a beneficial influence on Literature?"

<i>Affirmative.</i>	SPEAKERS:	<i>Negative.</i>
Mr. J. G. ALCORN, <i>Treasurer</i> ; " W. T. YOUNG,	 Not decided.	Mr. J. DE GLANVILLE, " R. H. ELMES

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*Monday, 15th April, 1867.*

P. J. KEENAN, Esq., V.P., Chief of Inspection, Board of National Education, in the Chair.

*Essay.*—"Dramatic Hebraistics," by Mr. Jephson H. Smith, *Auditor*.

SPEAKERS:		
Mr. T. NICOLLS, " J. R. O'FLANAGAN,		Mr. W. T. YOUNG, " J. DE GLANVILLE.

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*Tuesday, 23rd April, 1867.*

JAMES LOWNDES, Esq., in the Chair.

*Debate.*—"That the Extinction of the Turkish Empire would be beneficial to Europe."

<i>Affirmative.</i>	SPEAKERS:	<i>Negative.</i>
Mr. T. A. MOONEY, " J. DE GLANVILLE, " R. H. ELMES,	 Decided in the affirmative.	Mr. W. J. GERNON, <i>Secretary</i> .

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*Tuesday, 30th April, 1867.*

HENRY H. STEWART, Esq., M.D., Lucan Lunatic Asylum, in the Chair.

*Essay.*—"Dryden, his Life and Times," by Mr. J. de Glanville.

SPEAKERS:		
Mr. W. T. YOUNG,	Mr. J. LOWNDES,	Mr. J. G. ALCORN, <i>Treasurer</i> .

*Monday, 6th May, 1867.*

JOHN FRANCIS WALLER, ESQ., LL.D., in the Chair.

*Debate.*—"That the Career of Lord Castlereagh is worthy of approbation."

SPEAKERS:

*Affirmative.*

Mr. H. L. JEPHSON,  
" W. F. MADDEN,\*

*Negative.*

Mr. R. H. ELMES.

Decided in the negative.

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*Monday, 13th May, 1867.*

WILLIAM GERONON, ESQ., M.A., Secretary, Board of Charities,  
in the Chair.

*Essay.*—"The Civil Service," by Mr. Charles H. Brien.

SPEAKERS:

Mr. R. H. ELMES,  
" J. G. ALCORN, *Treasurer*;

Mr. J. LOWNDES,  
" T. NICOLLS.

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*Monday, 3rd June, 1867.*

J. R. O'FLANAGAN, ESQ., M.R.I.A., in the Chair.

*Debate.*—"Should the State enforce the education of children?"

SPEAKERS:

*Affirmative.*

Mr. W. T. YOUNG,  
" J. G. ALCORN, *Treasurer*;  
" W. F. MADDEN,\*

*Negative.*

Mr. J. LOWNDES,  
" W. J. GERONON, *Secretary*;  
" J. DE GLANVILLE,  
" W. CORBY.

Decided in the negative.

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*Wednesday, 12th June, 1867.*

JAMES LOWNDES, ESQ., in the Chair.

*Debate.*—"That Warren Hastings was justly impeached."

SPEAKERS:

*Affirmative.*

Mr. W. F. MADDEN,\*  
" T. A. MOONEY,

*Negative.*

Mr. J. R. O'FLANAGAN.

Decided in the negative.

\* Prize Speaker for the Session.

*Monday, 17th June, 1867.*

JAMES H. OWEN, Esq., M.A., Architect, Board of Works,  
in the Chair.

*Essay.*—“Random Notes on some Conventionalisms,”\* by Mr.  
W. T. Young.

SPEAKERS:

Mr. J. R. O'FLANAGAN,

Mr. HENRY L. JEPHSON.

*Monday, 24th June, 1867.*

Concluding Meeting of the Session.

Election of Officers and Committee, Award of Prizes, &c.

\* Prize Essay for the Session.

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